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EMPEDOCLES, *ON NATURE* I.273-87: PLACE, THE ELEMENTS AND STILL NO ‘WE’

SIMON TRÉPANIER

Abstract.

This article presents a new, complete edition of Empedocles, *On Nature* I.265-90, in particular lines I.273-87 or **a (ii) 3-17** of the Strasburg papyrus of Empedocles, *P. Strasb. gr. Inv. 1665-1666*. The basis for the edition is two new supplements to section **a (ii)** grounded on doxographic testimony. These new supplements confirm that the passage is devoted to cosmology, specifically the relation between place and the elements. That in turn provides a reliable framework for a reconstruction of the remaining lines. More controversially, the reconstruction gives new grounds for rejecting the controversial variant reading συνερχόμεθα ‘we come together’ found in two or perhaps three instances in the papyrus. If the content of the passage is consistently cosmological, these new variants must be no more than scribal errors.

Keywords: Empedocles, elements, cosmic cycle, natural places, doxography.

This study proposes a new and full reconstruction of the text of Empedocles’ *On Nature* I.273-87 or section **a (ii) 3-17** of the Strasburg papyrus of Empedocles.¹

¹ Martin and Primavesi 1999, henceforth M-P. References to the Empedoclean corpus follow the standard numbering from Diels and Kranz 1934; when cited, the text of doxographical material has been compared with Mansfeld and Runia 2009. In chronological order, the publications known to me, whether full editions or contributions to the text of papyrus, but excluding most reviews, are the following:

The lines are not the worst preserved section of the papyrus, but are more difficult to reconstruct than others for lack of either an overlap with known fragments or, until now, any conclusive indicators of their content. What Empedocles says in these lines, I will argue, is that except when they are subsumed into ‘one’, or the *Sphairos*-god, the four elements are always scattered and on the move. More precisely, from cycle to cycle their position in the world is not fixed to any particular level or location.

1. TWO NEW TEXTUAL SUPPLEMENTS

Location and continuity of I.232-291; Simplicius’ partial quotation

Lines I.273-87 follow upon or, as I would have it, continue the general exposition of the cycle begun at I.232.² A sure *terminus* for the whole section is

Osborne 2000, Algra and Mansfeld 2001, Curd 2001, A. Laks 2002, Janko 2004, Pierris 2005, Inwood, 2006; Viték, 2006, Mansfeld and Algra 2008, Primavesi 2008, Primavesi 2011, Gemelli Marciano 2013. This edition supersedes Trépanier 2003.

² = DK B 17 and its continuation. Thanks to a stichometric mark indicating that that line **a (ii) 30** was line 300 of the roll, and Simplicius’ identification of B 17 as from Book I of the Physics or *On Nature*, we have the absolute position of these lines, see M-P p. 103-111. I follow DK by including line B 17.9/I.240 (imported from B 26.8), which Simplicius’ citation of B 17 omits, so that my numbering runs from 232. Of subsequent publications, perhaps the most significant is Richard Janko's 2004 case for positioning the two larger sections **c** and **d** (and two smaller sections **b** and **f**) whose position M-P left open, as the immediate column-sequels to the longer continuous section formed by B 17 plus sections **a (i)** and **a (ii)**. That allows Janko to propose an extended sequence from line B17.1/I.233 all the way down to I.364, with

I.291 where we have a ten-line transitional passage, in which Empedocles announces to the hearer a transition to what we would call biology, or as he puts it, ‘the coming-together and unfolding of life’ (I.294 and 300).

The text of I.232 to I.273 is mostly secure, based upon fragment B 17 from Simplicius (=I.232-67), plus four lines known from Aristotle (I.269-72 = *Metaphys.* B 4. 1000a29), but the papyrus is our only witness to lines I.267-8 which bridge the gap between the two witnesses. Based on the length of Simplicius’ 35-line quotation at *In phys.* 157 25 ff., we can be relatively confident that B 17/I.232-67 was the main or fullest exposition of the doctrine of the cosmic cycle in the work. But does Simplicius’ quotation reproduce the integrity of the original Empedoclean section on the cycle?

It is a comforting assumption to think that the original section ends where Simplicius leaves off, but there is in fact no reason to exclude the alternative. If we look for evidence of transition to a new topic, then as we will see below, there is none. On the contrary, all of the fully extant verbs over the lines in question are in the present tense. In an Empedoclean cyclical universe, this will be the tense used to describe general conditions, truths and facts. More modestly, it is simply the same tense as in preceding lines devoted to the description of the cycle. The reconstructed text therefore can also serve to confirm its prior working assumption that the whole sequence from I.232 to 291, including the debated lines, functions as a single expository unit.

some gaps. It is too early to tell if Janko’s reconstruction will become the standard view; Primavesi, for instance, in 2008 and 2011, accepts Janko’s positioning of **c**, but not of **d**. The question has no bearing on the present study, whose scope is limited to *On Nature* I.273-87.

If that is true, however, one immediate consequence of it is that Simplicius' quotation of B 17 will thereby be shown to be only a partial account of the cycle. Does that mean that Simplicius misrepresents Empedocles? Not necessarily. Simplicius' reason for quoting *On Nature* I.232-67 is to illustrate Aristotle's reference to Anaxagoras and Empedocles as thinkers who include both 'the one and the many' in their physical theories (*Physics* 187a21). After first quoting Anaxagoras at some length, Simplicius quotes Empedocles DK B 17/*On Nature* I.232-67 to display the alternation of 'the one and the many' and to identify his six first principles. But Simplicius does not include the entire section intended by Empedocles, because at that point in his commentary on the *Physics* the relation of place and the elements in the Empedoclean cosmos has no bearing on Aristotle's remarks. By contrast, and still assuming that lines I.232-90 form a single expository unit, it is possible to see why Empedocles himself has good reason to discuss this topic at exactly this point. His reason is that the notion of a cosmic cycle, taken on its own, might easily lead the hearer to imagine that the cycle is a series of identical iterations. But the evidence is clear that the Empedoclean cycle reserves, at least in its cosmic phases, a role for chance. That is to say, when Strife breaks apart the unity of the *Sphairos*-god, the elements always go their separate ways, but they do not always end up in the same places either within one cosmos, or from one cosmos to the next; rather, they move at random (references in note 7). This Empedoclean disambiguation, I will now argue, is the point of I.273-87.

Two new Supplements

The two new textual anchors for my reconstruction are lines I.279 (= **a (ii) 9**) and I.284 (= **a (ii) 14**). Other supplements are as in M-P, unless noted.

1.279 (= a (ii) 9) The preserved section offers [οὔ]τε γὰρ ἥλιος τ[. .] . ν . So far, the only suggestion for the rest of the line is Primavesi 2011: [οὔ]τε γὰρ ἥλιος Τ[ιτ]ήν ο[ὔτ' ἄ]πλετος αἰ θήρ]. But a more obvious possibility is that the missing next word is τ[όπ]ον. The best parallels for this are, first, I.286, 7 lines down, where the secure portions of the text mention elemental ‘wandering’ and ‘places’ τόπους πλαγ[χθέντα; second, line 15 of section **d** of the papyrus, possibly no more than two 30-line columns later according to Janko, has . .] τόπον ἐσχάτιον .]ην where the ‘furthestmost place’ is connected to fire ascending from the earth. Reinforcing the likelihood of τ[όπ]ον is that the next letter shows clear traces of the left part of a curved letter, ε θ ο ω c etc. so that it becomes reasonably certain that we can restore two words here: [οὔ]τε γὰρ ἥλιος τ[όπ]ον ἐ[σχάτον (the more standard spelling, as in B 36) or ἐ[σχάτιον as in **d** 15. Finally, such a connection between the sun and the outer limits of the world is clearly expressed in doxographical testimony A 49: Ἐ τὸν τοῦ ἡλίου περίδρομον εἶ ναι περιγραφὴν τοῦ πέρατος τοῦ κόσμου. ‘Empedocles [says] that the circuit of the sun is an outline of the limit of the cosmos.’

When we combine that with 1.278 (easily supplemented in combination with 1.273), we can reconstruct a coherent three-line statement:

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| a (ii) 8/1.278 | [πά]ντῃ δ' ἄσσον[τ]α διαμ[περὲς οὐδαμὰ λήγει.] |
| a (ii) 9/1.279 | [οὔ]τε γὰρ ἥλιος τ[όπ]ον ἐ[σχάτον ἀμφιπολεύων] |
| a (ii) 10/1.280 | [ὄρ]μῃ(ι) τῇ δέ γε μοῦ[νον ἀναῖσσει περὶ κύκλον (?)] |

and never do they stop soaring every which way through and through.

For neither does the sun, revolving around the outermost place,
by that very motion soar only up around its circuit ...

For the last part of I.279, I suggest τ[όπ]ον ἐ[σχάτον ἀμφιπολεύων, cf. B 41, of the sun ἄλλ' ὁ μὲν ἄλισθαι ὡς μέγαν οὐρανὸν ἀμφιπολεύει. At I.280 the opening reads [. . .]μη τηιδε γε μ . . . M-P tentatively suggested [ὄρ]μή τηιδέ γέμου[σα, Janko [ὄρ]μή(ι) τηιδέ γέμου[σα with the moon supplied in I.279 as subject of the feminine participle. More recently, Primavesi 2011 has [ὄρ]μή(ι) τηιδέ γέμον[τε, in which fire or the sun and αἱ θήρ are not now “beide von diesem Drang erfüllt...” Both options are now made less plausible by τ[όπ]ον ἐ[σχάτον]. In the context of a discussion of movement (I.278) it seems better to restore γε μοῦνον or perhaps τηιδέ γε μοῦνον together as an adverbial phrase denying that the sun moves only one way, either up or to the outer perimeter.³ That, we recall, is the actual the point Empedocles is making:

³ For μοῦνον as an adverb, compare **a (ii)** 21/ I. 291 [Σπεῦ]δε δ' ὅπως μὴ μοῦνον ἄν' οὔατα [μῦθος ἵκεται]. Other instances are B 134.4 φρήν ἰερή... ἔπλετο μοῦνον and (with μόνον) B 2.5 αὐτὸ μόνον πεισθέντες. For τηιδέ cf. B 61. Another possibility is that the missing iota hints at a lost verb, ὀρμᾷ ‘rushes.’ e.g. [ὄρ]μ(ᾱ) τηιδέ γε μοῦνον ‘nor does the sun.../ rush only in this way...’ The coordinated syntax of I.281 [οὔ]τε τι τῶν ἄλλων would also be slightly smoother, while rarity of the verb can explain why the missing iota was dropped: it and the alpha were lost by assimilation to a more common noun. So perhaps: [ὄρ]μ(ᾱ) τηιδέ γε μοῦνον ἄν' ἔσχατα τέρματα κύκλου with the second half of the line supplied from B 35.10 τῶν πᾶν ἐξέστηκεν ἐπ' ἔσχατα τέρματα κύκλου. Compare A 49 quoted above and

the elements move in all directions, [πά]ντῃ δ' αἴσسون[τ]α. Nevertheless, we are still short a main verb. Based on the negation [οὔ]τε ... μοῦ[νον] I suggest ἀναΐσσει 'springs up', that is, rises, the verb itself picking up on αἴσسون[τ]α. What point then is Empedocles making? In order to support the claim that an element can travel in any direction, he invokes the sun's daily motion through the sky as a quasi-rhetorical question. In its daily motion, ἀμφιπολεύων and [ὄρ]μῃ(ι) τῇδε, the sun, that is the element fire, does not only rise. As all hearers knew, it also sets. Thus the sun, that is fire, travels in (at least) two directions.⁴ The next lines, though poorly preserved, then appear to generalize this denial of 'uni-directionality' to the other elements. For now, however, if we also follow Janko in postulating a missing iota adscript and thereby take [ὄρ]μῃ in the dative, we can construe it with τῇδε, and reconstruct the line as above.

I. 284 (=a (ii) 14). This line is best considered along with the two preceding verses.

a (ii) 12/I.282 [ὄλ]λὰ μεταλλάσسون[τ]α . . .]εἰ κύκλωι []

Parmenides B 11 πῶς γὰρ α καὶ ἥλιος ἥδ' ἐσελήνη/ αἰ θήρ τε ξυνὸς γάλα τ' οὐράνιον
καὶ Ὀλυμπος/ ἔσχατος ἥδ' ἄστρον θερμὸν μένος ὑψήθησαν/ γίνεσθαι.

⁴ Space prohibits exploring the problems related to the double or reflected sun, see DK A 30 and 56-8 = Graham 2010, no. 61-64 and 77, where one does find the phrase ὀρμή ἡλίου. More likely Empedocles at this stage is arguing based only upon the visible daily rising and setting of the sun. The visible or reflected sun does not include all the available cosmic fire, see B 52 'many fires burn beneath the surface of the earth'.

a (ii) 13/I.283 [. . . .]τε μὲν γὰρ γαῖ [. . .]άτη θεεί ἤέλ[]

a (ii) 14/I.284 [.]τος, ἦν δὴ κα[ί ν]υν ἐπ' ἀνδράσι τ[]

The first line describes how the elements exchange or take turns in the cycle, which Empedocles then proceeds to illustrate in the next lines by discussing the sun, ἤέλ[, and earth, γαῖ [α. The earth is said (sometimes ?) to run but the sun's function in the line must be reconstructed. In the passage above, however, we have seen that fire or the sun was associated with the furthest or topmost place. The choice of the earth 'running' here must be offering a contrast of some kind, since the earth is usually associated with immobility and the lowest regions, e.g. Xenophanes B 30. It seems likely, therefore, that the passage is related to Empedocles' denial of natural places, for which the doxographic evidence is unambiguous, DK A 35 (Aëtius II 7, 6 Diels/ II. 7.7 Mansfeld-Runia):

Ἐ ἔλεγε μὴ διὰ παντὸς ἐστῶτας εἶναι μηδ' ὕφισμένους τοὺς τόπους τῶν
στοιχείων, ἀλλὰ πάντα τοὺς ἀλλήλων μεταλαμβάνειν.

Empedocles (declares that) the locations of the elements are not completely fixed or determined, but (they) all share in the locations of each other.

(transl. Mansfeld-Runia)

Achilles. *Introduction to Aratus*. p. 13.12-14 Di Maria. ὁ δὲ Ἐ οὐ δίδωσι τοῖς
στοιχείοις ὕφισμένους τόπους, ἀλλ' ἀντιπαρὰ χωρεῖν ἀλλήλοις φησίν, ὥστε
τὴν γῆν μετέωρον φέρεσθαι καὶ τὸ πῦρ ταπεινότερον.

Empedocles does not assign defined locations to the elements, but says that they give way to one another, so that the earth is carried up on high and fire down below.

Based on those testimonies, in Trépanier 2003 I suggested γαῖ (α) [ὑπ]άτη θέει ἥελ[ίοιο] ‘earth runs uppermost of the sun’.⁵ As stated above, I still think that that is the right idea. It can be improved upon, however:

- a (ii) 12/I.282 [ἄλ]λὰ μεταλλάσσον[τα κρατ]εῖ κύκλωι [τάδ’ ἕκαστα.]⁶
- a (ii) 13/I.283 [καὶ πο]τὲ μὲν γὰρ γαῖ (α) [ὑπ]άτη θέει ἥελ[ιός τε]
- a (ii) 14/I.284 [νέρτα]τος, ἦν δὴ κα[ί ν]υν ἐπ’ ἀνδράσι τ[άξιν ἔχουσι.]

but alternating one after another each of these dominates in a cycle

For sometimes even the earth runs uppermost, and the sun

nethermost, a ranking which even now among men they hold.

The inverted positions of earth and fire match *exactly* the description from Achilles, while the idea that the elements can occupy any level is confirmed from a number of

⁵ See Primavesi 2008 for some criticisms. On ὕπατος see LSJ, s.v. II. The most direct parallel is Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* τρόπον αἰ γυπιῶν οἳ τ’ ἐκπατίοις/ ὄλγεσι παίδων ὕπατοι λεχέων/ (50) στροφοδινοῦνται/ πτερύγων ἐρετμοῖ σιν ἐρεσσόμενοι. For a defense of the reading, Denniston and Page 1957, 72.

⁶ M-P [ἄλ]λὰ μεταλλάσσον[τ’ ἄσ]σιν εἰ κύκλωι [ἀπάντη. See the app. crit. in part 2.

other fragments and from Aristotle, Plutarch and Philoponus.⁷ The notion of surprise, moreover, is what leads me to suggest [καὶ πο]τὲ μὲν, with the surprise underlined by the emphatic μὲν *solitarium*. For νέρτα]τος compare DK B 35.3-4 ἐπεὶ Νεῖκος μὲν ἐνέρτατον ἴκετο βένθος / δίνης.⁸ The element of surprise shows that

⁷ See B 53 quoted below and B 54, both from Aristotle, and B 52 from Proclus. Plutarch *De facie* 927f, source of B 76. On chance, see B 103 and B 104 with Simplicius' comment, *Phys.* 331, 10 For chance in biology, compare also B 75 or B 85. Clearest is John Philoponus in *Aristotelis Physica* (=CAG XVI-XVII) 261.17-25 'Empedocles at any rate says that the air obtained the upper place by chance. For all things being previously mixed together in the *Sphairos*, then separated by Strife, each one was carried to the place in which it now is not by any providence, but as it so happened. At least, he says about air's upward motion, "thus it so happened to be running then, at other times otherwise" (B 53). For at present water is atop the earth, but at another time, if it so happened in another cosmogony, when the cosmos once more comes to be from the *Sphairos*, it would obtain another ranking and location (ἄλλην τινὰ τάξιν καὶ τόπον ἀπολαβεῖν).'

⁸ The alternative reconstruction with [ἄλλο]τε μὲν γὰρ γαῖ (α) [ἄβ]άτη ἡελ[ίου τε in line 283 and [σφαῖρα] τόσην δὴ κα[ί ν]υν ἐπ' ἀνδράσι τιέμεν ἐστίν in 284 (Primavesi 2011) both make sense separately, but together produce nonsense. For the converse implication of [ἄλλο]τε or [δὴ τό]τε construed with the next line is that there are times when the sphere of the sun runs (and is trod upon?). But the sun runs now, so what point is being made? In any case, σφαῖρα for 'sphere of the sun' is completely unattested. It is never used of the sun in Empedocles or that I can tell in all of Presocratic philosophy, where the term always denotes the outer limit of the

Empedocles is not claiming that this arrangement holds now *in general*. Like the earth running, the statement is meant as a sort of provocation, to draw the hearer's attention to how the claim is to be explained or unpacked. Notably, in ensemble **b**/B76, most likely two and a half columns down, or c. 85 lines according to Janko 2004, Empedocles offers a catalogue of animals with 'earth' or hard parts on top or the outside, such as conches and horned stags, and then turns to the hearer and declares **b** 2/ B 76.3 ἔνθ' ὄψει χθόνα χρωτὸς ὑπέρτατα ναιετάουσιν, 'whence you will see earth dwelling atop of flesh'. Line 284, therefore, may look ahead to a passage in which Empedocles used examples from the diversity of relative elemental locations found in (microcosmic) animals and plants to claim that the elements have no inherent dispositions to take up specific macrocosmic locations in the cosmos. So perhaps here one could also restore ἦν δὴ κα[ί ν]υν ἐπ' ἀνδράσι τ[άξιν δείξω] 'a ranking which, even now, among men, I will point out.'

2. EMPEDOCLES, *ON NATURE* I. 265-90

Thanks to those two passages, we are in a position to attempt a reconstruction of the lines I.273-87. For context and other reasons given below, the text includes all of lines I.265 to 290. The text and apparatus give the papyrological data, main alternative supplements and parallels. Issues requiring more evidence or longer discussion are taken up as needed in a series of notes keyed to specific lines.

I.265 (B 17.34) [ἀλλ' αὐτ(ᾷ) ἔστιν ταῦτα, δι' ἀλλήλων] δὲ θέοντα

heaven; see the indices in Viték (2006) and DK vol. 3; in Empedocles κύκλος is used of the sun at B 47.

- I.266 (B 17.35) [γίγνεται ἄλλοτε ἄλλα καὶ ἡνεκὲ]ς αἰ ἐν ὁμοῖ α,
- I.267 [ἄλλοτε μὲν Φιλότῃτι συνερχόμεν' εἰς ἕνα κόσμον
- I.268 [ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ διαφύντα Κότῳι πλέ]ον' ἐξ ἑνὸς εἶ ναι,
- I.269 [ἐξ ὧν πάνθ' ὅσα τ' ἦν ὅσα τ' ἔσθ' ὅ]σα τ' ἔσσειτ' ὀπίσσω
- I.270 [δένδρεά τ' ἐβλάστησε καὶ ἄνδρες] ἡδὲ γυναῖ κες
- I.271 [θ] ἦρές τ' οἱ ὠνοί.[τε καὶ] ὕδατοθρέ[μμονες ἰ χθῆς]
- I.272 [κ] αἰ τε θεοὶ δολιχα[ἰων]ες τιμῆσ[ι φέριστοι.
- I.273 [πά]ντῃ δ' αἴσσοντα [διαμ]περὲς οὐδ[αμὰ λήγει,]
- I.274 [π]υκνῆσιν δίνῃσ[ι μεταλλάσσον]τα.[κελεύθους]
- I.275 [ν]ωλεμές, οὐδέ πο[τ' αὐτὰ τόπους πλαγχθέντ' ἀπολήγει (?)]
- I.276 [πολλοὶ δ' αἰ ὦν]ες πρότερ[ον τετελεσμένοι εἶ σι]
- I.277 [πρίν] τούτων μεταβῆνα[ι ἐς ἕν μόνον εἶ ναι ἔνερθε,]
- I.278 [πά]ντῃ δ' αἴσσον[τ]α.διαμ[περὲς οὐδαμὰ λήγει.]
- I.279 [οὔ]τε γὰρ ἥλιος τ[όπ]ον ἐ[σχάτον ἀμφιπολεύων]
- I.280 [ὄρ]μῃ(ι) τῇ δέ γε μοῦ[νον ἀναῖσσει περὶ κύκλον (?)]
- I.281 [οὔ]τε τι τῶν ἄλλων [νῦν νέρτατα ναιετάοντων (?)]
- I.282 [ἀλ]λὰ.μεταλλάσσον[τα κρατ]εῖ.κύκλωι [τάδ' ἕκαστα.]
- I.283 [καὶ πο]τὲ μὲν γὰρ γαῖ (α) [ὑπ]άτη θεεὶ ἡέλ[ιός τε]
- I.284 [νέρτα]τος, ἦν δὴ κα[ί ν]υν ἐπ' ἀνδράσι τ[άξιν ἔχουσι.]
- I.285 [ὥς δ' α]ὔτως τάδ[ε π]άντα δι' ἀλλήλων [προθέουσι]
- I.286 [εἰς ἄλλο]υς τ(ε) ἄλλ[ους] τε.τόπους **πλαγ[χθέντα δὶχ' αὐτά]**
- I.287 [εἶ τ' αὖ εἰς] μεσάτους τ[(ε) συνε]ρχόμεν' ἕν μ[όνον εἶ ναι.]
- I.288 [Ἄλλ' ὅτ]ε.δὴ Νεῖκος [μὲν ὑπ]ερβατὰ βέν[θε' ἵ κηται]
- I.289 δ[ίν]ης, ἐν δὲ μέσ[ῃ] Φιλότῃς στροφά[λιγγι γένηται,]

I.290 ἐν τῇ δὴ τάδε πάντα συνέρχεται ἔν [μόνον εἶ ναι.]

Full references are in note 1. Unless noted, supplements are as in M-P. The apparatus does not aim to be exhaustive. For fuller details on textual variants in the indirect tradition (Aristotle and Simplicius), see Janko 2004. Abbreviations of frequently cited editions: M-P; T 2003 = Trépanier 2003; Janko = Janko 2004; Primavesi = Primavesi 2008; Graham 2010; Primavesi 2011; GM = Gemelli Marciano 2013.

I.265 δὲ θεόντα Simplicius γε θεόντα papyrus **I.267** [ἄλλοτε μὲν Φιλότητι
scripsi [ἄλλ' ἐν μὲν (?) M-P Janko GM συνερχόμεθ' 1st hand, συνερχόμεν' 2nd
hand.; συνερχόμεθ' M-P, Laks 2002, Inwood 2001, Janko, Primavesi;
συνερχόμεν' Algra-Mansfeld 2001, T 2003, Pierris, Viték 2006, Mansfeld-Algra
2008, Graham 2010, GM, cf. B. 26.5 ἄλλοτε μὲν Φιλότητι συνερχόμεν' εἰς ἕνα
κόσμον ἐνα 1st hand supralinear correction of ἐνε **I.268** [ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ διαφύντα
Κότῳ *scripsi*, cf. B 26.7 ἐν συμφύντα τὸ πᾶν and B 26. 9 ἡδὲ πάλιν διαφύντος
ἐνὸς πλέον' ἐκτελέθουσι for Κότῳ cf. B 21.7 ἐν δὲ Κότῳ διάμορφα καὶ ἄνδιχα
πάντα πέλονται [ἐν δ' Ἐθρῇ γε πάλιν διέφυ(?) πλέ]ον' M-P, Janko, GM
I.269-71 = Aristotle *Metaphys.* B 4. 1000a29-32. **I.269** ὅσσα τ' ἔσσετ' 1st hand, ὅσα
2nd hand (supralinear dot) ἔσσετ' papyrus; ἔσται Aristotle. The participle construal
of I.267-8 makes a single sentence out of I.265-72, where the joint activity of Love
and Strife produces plants, animals and gods, see I.294 and I.300. **I.273** [ἐ]ν τῇ
M-P, Janko, Primavesi, Graham; [πά]ντῃ T 2003, Viték 2006, GM 2013. The space
requires two letters, cf. I.274 [π]υκνῇσι **I.274** μεταλλάσσον]τα[κελεύθους]
scripsi, cf. B 115.8 ἀργαλέας βιότοιο μεταλλάσσοντα κελεύθους on the wandering

δαίμωνες; B 35.14 διαλλάξαντα κελεύθους of the elements changing from unmixed to mixture, both in the same *sedes*; cf. also B 17.12/B 26.10. Space favours μετα- over δια- but both are possible, if delta had a wide base. **I.275-7 scripsi** **I.275** οὐδέ πο[τ' αὐτὰ τόπους πλαγχθέντ' ἀπολήγει] cf. 1.286 τρόπους πλαγχθέντα [ἀπολήγει cf. B 17.30 **I.276** or πρότεροι or πρότερ[ω τετελεσμένοι εἴ σι cf. B 30.2-3 τελειομένοιο χρόνιοι, / ὅς σφιν ἁμοιβαῖος πλατέος παρ' ἐλήλαται ὄρκου; *Iliad* 1.212 τετελεσμένον ἔσται, 14.196 etc. (x 8); τετελεσμένον ἐστίν, *Odyssey* 5.90 (x 2); Hesiod, *Theogony* 795 τετελεσμένον εἰς ἐνιαυτὸν (on the exile of the banished god); Parmenides B 8.42, of Being, τετελεσμένον ἐστί. **I.277** cf. B 26.10 εἰ σόκεν ἔν συμφύντα τὸ πᾶν ὑπένερθε γένηται **I.278** cf. I. 273 [πά]ντῃ all edd. but [ἐ]ν τῇ Graham **I.279 scripsi** cf. d 15 . .] τόπον ἐσχάτιον . .]ην ἀμφοπολεύων cf. B 41 on the sun, ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ὀλισθεῖς μέγαν οὐρανὸν ἀμφοπολεύει [οὔ]τε γὰρ ἥελιος Τ[ιτ]ὴν ο[ὕτ' ἄ]πλετος αἰθήρ Primavesi 2011 **I.280** μοῦνον ἀναῖσσει περὶ κύκλον] *scripsi*. For μοῦνον, **a (ii)** 21/ I. 291 [Σπεῦ]δε δ' ὅπως μὴ μοῦνον ἀν' οὔατα [μῦθος ἵκεται]; for ἀναῖσσει, cf. I.273, I. 278 and B.100.6-7 ἔνθεν ἔπειθ' ὁπότεν μὲν ἀπαῖξι τέρην αἶμα / αἰθήρ παφλάζων καταῖσσεσθαι οἷ δματι μάργωι ; for περὶ κύκλον, cf. B 38.4 Τιτὰν ἥδ' αἰθήρ σφίγγων περὶ κύκλον ἅπαντα or perhaps [ὄρ]μ(ᾱ) τῇδέ γε μοῦνον ἀν' ἔσχατα τέρματα κύκλου, cf. B 35.10 τῶν πᾶν ἐξέστηκεν ἐπ' ἔσχατα τέρματα κύκλου and A 49 [ὄρ(?)]μῇ τῇδέ γέμου[σα M-P: [ὄρ]μῇ(ι) τῇδέ γέμου[σα Janko [ὄρ]μῇ(ι) τῇδέ γέμου[τε Primavesi 2011 **I.281** [νῦν νέρτατα ναιετάοντων (?)] *scripsi* cf. **b** 2/ B 76.3 ἐνθ' ὄψει χθόνα χρωτὸς ὑπέρτατα ναιετάουσιν; B 112.2 ναίετ' ἀν' ἄκρα πόλεος perhaps [οὔ]τε τι τῶν ἄλλων [ὅσα νῦν ἐσορῶμεν ἅπαντα] cf. B 38.2 ἐξ ὧν δῆλ' ἐγένοντο τὰ νῦν ἐσορῶμεν ἅπαντα [μένει ἔμπεδον οὐρανῶ ἄστρον] Janko **I. 282**

after T 2003, except [ἅπαντα, cf. B 17.29 ἐν δὲ μέρει κρατέουσι περιπλομένοιο χρόνοιο. For the middle gap, *pace* Primavesi 2008, there is space for 5-6 letters.

Metrical advantages: 1) restores third-foot feminine caesura 2) avoids licit but unusual short in ω of κύκλωι. [ὅλ]λ᾽.μεταλλάσσον[τ' ἄσ]σῃ.κύκλωι [ἅπαν]τη M-P GM [ἅπαντα, Janko **I.283** [καὶ πο]τὲ μὲν γὰρ γαῖ (α) [ὑπ]άτη θέει ἤελ[ιός τε] *scripsi* cf. Achilles. *Introduction to Aratus*. P. 13.12-14 Di Maria, cited above.

For the μὲν *solitarium*, see B 62.4 and possibly B 134.2 (a modern supplement) [δὴ τό]τε μὲν γὰρ γαῖ (α) [ὀβ]άτη θέει ἤελ[ιός τε] M-P GM Janko [ὀβ]άτη G. Most in M-P [ἄλλο]τε μὲν γὰρ Primavesi γαῖ (α) [ὑπ]άτη θέει ἤελ[ιόιο] T 2003 ἤελ[ιού τε]/[σφαῖ]ρα Janko, Primavesi, Graham GM **I.284** [νέρτα]τος *scripsi* cf. B 35.3-4 ἐπεὶ Νεῖκος μὲν ἐνέρτατον ἵκετο βένθος / δίνης τ[άξιν] *scripsi* cf. Philoponus in *Aristotelis Physica* (CAG XVI-XVII) 261.17-25, quoted above. Perhaps τ[άξιν] δεῖ ξω.] [σφαῖ]ρα,] τόσην δὴ κα[ί ν]υν ἐπ' ἀνδράσι τεκμήρασθαι M-P, Janko GM ἐπ' ἀνδράσι τ[ιέμεν] ἐστίν Primavesi 2011 **I.285** [θέει αἰ εἰ] T 2003 Viték 2006 [προθέουσι] Janko [γε δραμόντα] Primavesi **I.286** [εἰς ἄλλο]υς *scripsi* [κᾶλλο]υς M-P Janko GM ἄλλ[α ἴ]κα]νε. M-P Janko ἄλλ[ο]τε ἄλλ[α]. T 2003 ἄλλ' [ἔσχη]κε. Primavesi 2011 πλαγ[χθέντ' ἰ]δίους τε] M-P, Primavesi 2008, 2011 πλαγ[χθέντα καὶ ἄλλους] Janko **I.287** [εἴ τ' αὖ]εἰς] *scripsi* μεσάτους 1st hand *supra lineam* corr. of μεσάτους μεσάτους τ[. . .]ρχόμεθ τ[(ε) συνε]ρχόμεν' *scripsi*, cf. Algra-Mansfeld 2001, Pierris, Viték 2006 Mansfeld-Algra 2008; perhaps τ[(ὀ) συνε]ρχόμεν' τ[ε συνε]ρχόμεν' T 2003 [οὗτοι δὴ] μεσάτους τ[εἰ σε]ρχόμεθ' ἐν μόνον εἶναι.] Janko [οὐδὴ πω] μεσάτους τ[ι εσε]ρχόμεθ' ἐν μόνον εἶναι.] Primavesi 2008 **I.288** Νεῖκος [μὲν ὑπ]έρβατα βέν[θε ἴ]κηται M-P [τ' ἀν]υπ[έρβατα] Pierris Janko Primavesi

I.265 But these are the same, yet racing through each other,
they become different at different times and always alike,
at one time through Love coming together into one order,
at another in turn grown apart through Hate to be more, from one,
from which all things that ever were, are, or will be hereafter

I.270 have sprouted up: trees and men and women
and wild beasts and birds and fishes reared in water
and even gods of long life, mightiest in their privileges.
And never do they cease rushing from end to end in all directions,
exchanging paths in tight-packed eddies

I.275 without rest, nor do they ever cease wandering from place to place.
But many ages are first brought to completion,
before they migrate from these to become one alone, down below,
and never do they cease rushing from end to end in all directions.
For neither does the sun, revolving around the outermost place,

I.280 by that very motion only rise around its circuit,
no more than any of the others now dwelling deepest,
but alternating one after another, each of them dominates in turn.
For sometimes even earth runs uppermost, and sun
nethermost, a ranking which even now among men they hold.

I.285 And just so do all of these race through one another:
both wandering from place to place each separately,
and then in turn coming together in the middle [places] to be one alone.
But when Strife has reached the uttermost depths

of the whirl, and Love comes to be in the centre of the maelstrom,
I.290 in her then do all of these come together to be one alone.

Lines I.273-77

The most difficult section to reconstruct is lines I.273-77. Accordingly, the text I offer does not pretend to be definitive in all details. Still, the reconstruction does aim to reflect what Empedocles said, even if we cannot be certain of the exact manner in which he said it. The reasons for this are, first, that we now can be confident of the topic: the random relation between place and the elements during cosmic phases. Second, and following from that, we now have a criterion for selecting parallels. Of these, I suggest that the most potent is DK B 26, which Simplicius tell us followed B 17 in Book I, albeit not immediately, and whose language indicates that it is a recap of our passage:

έν δὲ μέρει κρατέουσι περιπλομένοιο κύκλοιο,
καὶ φθίνει εἰς ἄλληλα καὶ αὖξεται έν μέρει αἴσης.
αὐτὰ γὰρ ἔστιν ταῦτα, δι' ἀλλήλων δὲ θέοντα
γίνοντ(αι) ἄνθρωποι τε καὶ ἄλλων ἔθνεα θηρῶν
5 ἄλλοτε μὲν Φιλότητι συνερχόμεν' εἰς ἓνα κόσμον,
ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ δίχ' ἕκαστα φορούμενα Νείκεος ἔχθει,
εἰ σόκεν έν συμφύντα τὸ πᾶν ὑπένερθε γένηται.
οὕτως ἦ μὲν έν ἐκ πλεόνων μεμάθηκε φύεσθαι
ἦ δὲ πάλιν διαφύντος ἑνὸς πλέον' ἐκτελέθουσι,
10 τῇ μὲν γίγνονταί τε καὶ οὐσφισιν ἔμπεδος αἰών·
ἦ δὲ τάδ' ἀλλάσσοντα διαμπερές οὐδαμᾶλήγει,

ταύτη δ' αἱ ἐν ἔασιν ἀκίνητοι κατὰ κύκλον.⁹

Beyond smaller textual points, B 26 can help with two interpretative issues. First, as others have noted, the context in which the phrase Φιλότητι συνερχόμεν' εἰς ἓνα κόσμον occurs at B 26.5, (in the participial form, see below), shows that the word κόσμος at I.267 can include a microcosmic sense, as a description of an individual mixture or biological entity.¹⁰ Second and more significant is line B 26.7 εἰς ὅκεν ἔν συμφύντα τὸ πᾶν ὑπένερθε γένηται 'until the all becomes one, grown together down below.' This description makes plain how the advent of the *Sphairos*-god in the

⁹ 'And in turn they predominate in the revolution of time/ and die into one another and are increased by a turn of fate./ For these are the same, but running through each other/ they become men and tribes of other beasts,/ (5) at one time through Love coming together into one order (κόσμος) / at another in turn each of them carried apart through the hatred of Strife/ until the all becomes one, grown together down below./ Thus, in that it has learned to grow into one from many/ and that, the one growing back apart, the many come to be/ (10) in this way they come to be and their span is not secure./ But in that they never cease continually changing/ in this way they always are, fixed in the cycle.' On the position of the passage, Simplicius reports, *in Phys.* 33.4-17, that B 26 followed B 21 at a small interval, but at *in Phys.* 159.10 that B 17 and B 21 are separated by a fair sized gap; on the text of B 26 in relation to B 17, see O'Brien, 1969, 323-4, who plausibly suggests adding both of B 26.7-8 to B 17.

¹⁰ Von Armin 1902 p. 26-7, Hölsher 1965, Stokes 1971 p. 167. Contra Hölsher on the macrocosmic reading, see O'Brien 2000.

macrocosmic alternation of ‘one and many’ puts an end to the microcosmic or biological alternation of the same: without Strife to hold them apart, Love ‘subsumes’ all the elements into one, or draws them down into the centre, so that no separate entities can exist, cf. I. 287. The point of ὑπένερθε at B 26.7 as a literal description of place now becomes far more conspicuous.¹¹ Based on it, I offer I.276-7 as an earlier and fuller version of B 26.7:

a (ii) 6/I.276 [πολλοὶ δ’ αἱ ὤνες πρότερ[ον τετελεσμένοι εἴ σι]

a (ii) 7/I.277 [πρίν] τούτων μεταβῆνα[ι ἐς ἓν μόνον εἴ ναι ἔνερθε]

The many *aeons* describe the duration of the cosmic phase(s) of the cycle, ending when the elements leave their constant whirls, πυκνήσιν δίνησι and wanderings, τόπους πλαγχθέντα so as to return to a single central ‘home’, the *Sphairos* as the elements’ *nostos*. For τετελεσμένοι εἴ σι at I.276, compare B 30.2 τελειομένοιο χρόνοιο used to demarcate the end of the untroubled *Sphairos* and the return of Strife to activity.¹² For line I.275, the preserved sections of I.286 suggests a plausible hexameter, *mutatis mutandis*.

¹¹ Compare also B 35.9 where Strife in retreat holds the elements up, ὅσ’ ἔτι Νεῖκος ἔρυκε μετάρσιον. For discussion, Graham 2005.

¹² The Byzantine *scholia* to Aristotle that give chronological specifics about the cycle do so in terms of χρόνοι, see text in Graham 2010 no. 66 and now Rashed 2014. Primavesi 2002, 198 first suggested that χρόνος renders the originally Empedoclean term αἱ ὤν. See Rashed 2001, 246, Primavesi 2006, Rashed 2014. In I.276, however, we get nothing more specific than [πολλοὶ] ‘many’.

Working our way back from that, we can now consider lines I.273-5. At I.273 the only point at issue is whether to restore the more obvious [πά]ντῃ, as in I.278, against ἐ]ν τῇ as advocated by M-P and Janko on the grounds that the left margin does not allow room for two letters. Against that I would counter that their general estimate of the left margin is about a half-letter too short (see also below on I.286-7). For now, the space for two letters is in any case insured by the certain [π]υκνῆσιν in the next line.¹³ If so, then the passage shows no evidence of a major transition, and the δέ in [πά]ντῃ δ' is merely resumptive. For I.274, the fact that the adverb [ν]ωλεμές is pushed into the next line supports the assumption of a long verb and noun combination in the previous line. Since the activity of the elements during cosmic phases involves fluctuation between mixtures and separation, we can supplement the line based on B 35.14 διαλλάξαντα κελεύθους which describes the elements changing from unmixed to mixture and B 115.8, ἀργαλέας βιότοιο μεταλλάσσοντα κελεύθους, where it applies to the wandering δαίμονες. (Here space marginally favours μεταλλάσσοντα.) This describes well the alternations undergone by the elements, see B 8.¹⁴

¹³ To what could ἐ]ν τῇ refer? M-P suggested Strife, restoring ἐν δ' Ἔθρηι at I.268, but since both Love and Strife are grammatically feminine, there would be no way of knowing which is meant.

¹⁴ B 8.3-4 ἀλλὰ μόνον μίξις τε διάλλαξις τε μίγντων /ἔστι, φύσις δ' ἐπὶ τοῖς ὀνομάζεται ἀνθρώποισιν. As Palmer 2009, 287-9 points out, its primary meaning comes from the field of exchange and reciprocity, so that διάλλαξις τε μίγντων should also include among its meanings 'exchange of things mixed.'

The reconstruction of I.279-84 was undertaken in section 1, so it only remains to discuss I.285-7. The single most important question is whether or not we should accept the first hand's 'we', which here was not corrected by the second hand, or if we can undertake to correct it based on the fact that the second hand corrected it in two other instances, I.267 and c 3. I chose to correct it, but since the 'we' cannot be discussed in isolation from its other instances, I postpone my full discussion of it to the next section. Two other non-negligible matters are the amount of space available 1) on the left margin, and 2) in the middle gap of I.287 μεσάτους τ[. . .]ρχόμεθ'. On 1) I find that the left margin is about a half-letter wider than allowed for by M-P, Janko and others (as above on line I.273). In most cases this is not enough to make a difference, but at lines I.286-7, I estimate the space available as more suited to 6 letters.¹⁵ On 2) the space only allows for 4 letters. Thus, the space appears too short to accommodate the combination of the standard or better-attested form of the verb, συνερχόμεν(α), along with the second letter of a two-letter word starting with tau that preceded the verb. Taking that into account, I would nevertheless supplement the lines as follows:

- a (ii) 15/I.285 [ὡς δ' α]ῦτως τάδε[ε π]άντα δι' ἀλλήλων [προθέουσι]
- a (ii) 16/I.286 [εἰς ἄλλο]υς τ(ε) ἄλλ[ους] τε.τόπους **πλαγ[χθέντα διχ' αὐτά]**
- a (ii) 17/I.287 [εἴ τ' αὔεις] μεσάτους τ[⟨ε⟩ συνε]ρχόμεν' ἐν μ[όνον εἴ ναι.]

¹⁵ And counting the sequence ει as equivalent to one normal letter-space. No reader should take these claims at my word, but should consult the photographs or, if possible, the originals in Strasburg. My autopsy on June 20th 2013.

The formula ὡς δ'αὖτως introduces a summing-up of the previous cosmological discussion and the next two lines define the two opposed general types of elemental movements produced in the cycle: I.286 describes the scattering into different directions of the elements under Strife; I.287 their return to the centre under Love, cf. B 26.7 ὑπένερθε γένηται. All of the action, moreover, is accounted for using the timeless participial present. Not only that, but we can now note that the lines also function as another instance of an AB poetic pattern of alternation, albeit here BA, in which a line devoted to the activity of Love is paired with one describing the work of Strife (more on this below). The resulting statement is certainly simpler and clearer than the alternatives.

Nevertheless, the text as reconstructed by Janko or Primavesi is the product of two defensible choices, even though I am arguing against them. The first is the decision not to correct the 'we', the second the fact that the gap in the middle of the line only allows for 4 of the 5 letters needed for μεσάτους τ[⟨ε⟩ συνε]ρχόμεν'. My text, therefore, trades consistency of subject matter and poetic regularity against an un-noted correction of συνερχόμεθ' to συνερχόμεν' ('we') and a conscious violation of 'Youties' law', the positing of an error within an unverifiable lacuna. To some this will seem too strong a normalization, a rejection of the new simply because it challenges the old. But in favour of both corrections I offer four narrower considerations here, to be followed by a broader stylistic argument in part 3.

First, and to my mind decisively, the alternative reconstructions of I.287 simply cannot be made to yield good sense.¹⁶ Other defenders of the 'we' insist that

¹⁶ Janko and Primavesi's translations lay bare the non-sequitur of their texts: Janko (2004): '...just so do these things through one another race/ and, roaming, visit other

the new reading is significant, but then fall short on specifics, whether textual or doctrinal.¹⁷ For clarity, my objections do not stem from any opposition to the philosophical implications sometimes drawn from the ‘we’, since I am convinced of the unity of Empedocles’ thought and his belief in reincarnation. But Empedocles can

places constantly;/ we do not reach the middle place in union.” Primavesi (2008)/(2011): “Genauso verhalten sich all diese (Elemente), nachdem sie durcheinandergelaufen sind,/ und jedes hat, abgeschlagen, einen anderen, ihm eigentümlichen Ort inne:/ Wir kommen ja noch nicht im geringsten in die mittleren (Orte) um ein einziges zu sein.” Primavesi’s insertion of a negation in the opening supplement, ‘not yet going to the centre’ [οὐ δὴ πω] μεσάτους follows criticisms from Laks 2002, 135-6, but this makes the two lines redundant while destroying the BA poetic pattern: the elements wander from the centre (1.286) and we (the elements (!)) do not go to the centre (1.287).

¹⁷ M-P 214 first defended it as a reference to transmigrating *daimones*, perhaps to be identified as souls or Love particles, but Primavesi later dropped it after the criticisms in Laks 2002. Primavesi 2008, 47-57, 2008a and 2013 identifies ‘we’ as the elements and rejects the exile of the soul from the poem as a myth; on the three ‘we’s see below. Others do not produce a text or fail to make explicit the doctrinal connection, if any, between ‘we’ and cosmic middle spaces. Sedley, 2007, 70-71 for instance does not analyze I.287 but relies on the debatable claims that we live in the age of increasing Love, and that the corrections represent a fiddling of the books by one party seeking to suppress the former. Against this, see now Mansfeld and Algra 2008, discussed below. Inwood 2009, 242 in turn defends the ‘we’s as philosophically significant but merely translates the securely attested portions of I.287, without offering any account of the line’s meaning.

tell us a story about us and our place in the cosmos without them.¹⁸ Almost as suspicious is that three lines later, at I.290, the cosmic unification of the elements is described in the third person, as impersonally as ever, and without any mention of ‘we’. Nor can the ‘we’ be squared with I. 285 [ὧς δ’α]ῦτως which shows that the two following lines are summing up earlier cosmological content.

Second, now in a more positive vein, the suggestion of a first-hand error in the middle gap is palaeographically plausible, since we have an epsilon followed by a lunate sigma. The uncorrected first draft of the line may well have looked like this:]ΜΕΤΑΤΟΥΤ[CYNE]ΡΧΟΜΕΘΕΝ[.¹⁹ Nor, in so far as we are dealing with a lacuna, can it be disproved that the suggested reading was not corrected by the first or second hand, as occurs in the preceding word, where μεσάτους is a *supra lineam* correction of an original μετᾶτους. Third, the triple ‘τε’s, taken together, explain and correlate the meaning of the ‘running through each other’ of I.285: sometimes it is the result of the separation of Strife into ‘other and other’ places, and sometimes it is the result of the elements returning to the centre.²⁰ Fourth and last, the formulaic nature of the

¹⁸ Trépanier 2014.

¹⁹ Or this:]ΜΕΤΑΤΟΥΤ[ΤΕΥΝΕ]ΡΧΟΜΕΘΕΝ[. Perhaps the *supra linear* correction of ΜΕΤΑ distracted the first hand. M-P originally postulated a similar omission by haplography at d 8, reading λόγων <σ> ἐπιβήσομεν’ αὔθις following the second hand’s correction of the first hand’s ἐπιβήσομεθ’ αὔθις.

²⁰ On three ‘τε’s, cf. I.269 ἐξ ὧν πάνθ’ ὅσα τ’ ἦν ὅσα τ’ ἔσθ’ ὅσα τ’ ἔσσετ’ ὀπίσσω. The second τε, suggested by the extant first, is compatible with the traces, including a possible downward swivel at the left top of the τ as part of the ligature the scribe favours between CT, visible in the next line at μεσάτους τ[. The third, restored τε at

phrase makes both corrections defensible. To use an analogy, imagine the same scenario in a papyrus of the *Iliad*. Where a papyrus gap would not allow enough letters for the supplement of an established Homeric formula, one otherwise indicated from the extant portions of the text, no one would hesitate to infer a scribal error or initial copying slip inside the lacuna. Our passage, I suggest, is the Empedoclean equivalent of such a situation. The only difference is that we do not have enough Empedocles to be certain of the regularity of the formula. Or maybe we do: this leads me to ‘we’.

3. ‘WE’ AND THE LITERARY UNITY OF I.232-292

The three thetas

In the short life of the ‘new Empedocles’, the biggest textual surprise in the papyrus has been the occurrence of the variant reading συνερχόμεθα ‘we come together’ in two or perhaps three instances of the papyrus, where our previous knowledge of the text would have led us to expect the neuter plural participle συνερχόμενα ‘coming together’ (references in note 1). Before the papyrus συνερχόμενα was the only known version of a recurrent Empedoclean poetic formula, as attested through the entire indirect tradition, mainly via Aristotle, Theophrastus and Simplicius. It is used by Empedocles to describe the unification or ‘coming together’ of the elements under Love, where it is usually paired with a line devoted to the activity of Strife, in an AB pattern, for example at I.238-9/ B 17.8-9:

I.287 divides the line at the feminine caesura favoured by Empedocles. The caesura seems to be the motivation for Primavesi’s 2011 τι in μεσάτους τ[ι ἐσε]ρχόμεθ’.

ἄλλοτε μὲν Φιλότητι συνερχόμεν' εἰς ἓν ἅπαντα ,
ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ δίχ' ἕκαστα φορεύμενα Νείκεος ἔχθει.

In the papyrus, the new variants in the formula are found at:

- a (i) 6/I. 267** [συνερχό]μεθ' εἰς ἓνα κόσμον
a(ii) 17/I.287 []μεσάτους τ[. . . ε]ρχόμεθ' ἓν μ[όνον εἶναι.]
c 3/I.303 [συν]ερχόμεθ' εἰς ἓν ἅπαντα.

At **a (i) 6/I.267**, however, a superscript N above the *theta* by the second hand corrects this back to the Simplician variant, while at **c 3**, despite a small gap, the traces of a similar N are clear, now between two dots. On general grounds, the convergence of the second hand, who certainly had access to the whole text, and more likely than not other copies (why not?), and the general Simplician tradition at both I.267/ **a (i) 6** and **c 3** are weighty considerations in favour of the participle, and are supported by the fact that even though it is the more familiar reading to us, *συνερχόμεν'* is in fact the *lectio difficilior*. For I. 267 as argued above, since B 26 keeps the participle, this suggests that the text of I. 267 that Simplicius had before him had the participle. Against this, M-P, Janko and then Primavesi (2008) (2011) and (2013), maintain that the combination of the three new readings are too unlikely to have been accidental and must go back to the original. But if so, what were the motives for the second hand's corrections? If we exclude the more obvious motive (the corrections are inferences from the grammar of the full text or, better still, based

on collation with a second text), we are left with no grounds for the *nu*'s, except to posit an ancient conspiracy (see n. 17).

Now, on the second hand's motives, Mansfeld and Algra have shown (2008 p. 326), that there exists a positive ancient parallel for giving a passage more immediacy by reformulating it from the third to the first person. At a minimum, this renders moot the claim that we can discern the philosophical motives of whoever wrote *nu*'s over *thêtas*. Or at least, as conspiracy theories go, the notion that someone with a philosophical agenda tried to make the text more vivid and relevant by introducing the *thêtas* is inherently more plausible (and now supported) than that someone tried to make it more bland and impersonal by suppressing them.

But if we dispense with conspiracy theories, where then did the *thêtas* originate? Something altogether less sinister may be at play. As suggested by Osborne (2000) in her initial review of M-P, the first hand may have thought that *συνερχόμεν was a solecism for the indicative middle form συνερχόμεθα, and having made the wrong diagnosis once, went on to change it mechanically thereafter. The second hand either knew better or was able to check the reading in another manuscript or both. In textual matters, a dumb mistake is still often the best — because simplest— explanation. Thus, while Osborne remained agnostic, I still follow the stronger line advocated by Algra and Mansfeld (2001 and 2008) and myself (2003), to correct all of the new readings back to the participle, including the uncorrected **a (ii)** 17/I.287. In this case, that means doing so even at the price of positing an error within the lacuna at that line. To say this, of course, is not to deny that elsewhere in his poem Empedocles could have used the indicative form συνερχόμεθα. In end, the decisive point remains that in each of the three instances,

considered separately, the participle produces a better reading.²¹ As to why **a (ii)** 17/I.287 was not corrected, we can just as easily imagine that the second hand caught two of these, I.267 and **c** 3, but simply missed the third, a common occurrence in papyri, even of the highest quality.²²

²¹ Contra Primavesi 2013 718: ‘Doch ist der Indikativ syntaktisch an allen drei Stellen dem in diesen Formeln sonst gebräuchlichen Partizip συνερχόμεν’ (B17.7, B 26.5) eindeutig vorzuziehen.’ Yet in all three cases he has to resort to special pleading. In I.267, ‘we’ are elements, ‘wie (Elementen)’ and κόσμον means the Sphere, not plural individuals (as also according to him at B 26.5). At I.287 ‘we’ are also elements, despite the non-sequitur it produces and the destruction of the AB poetic formula. At I.303 ‘we’ are elements again (now ‘Sphairosglieder’), despite the fact that, grammatically, the participle is fully protected by μελέων ... ὄγκον in I.302 and γυῖ α in I.304 and that from the context it is clear that biological processes are being discussed, see Gemelli Marciano 2005. The philosophical implications of this systematic identification of ‘we’ with the elements cannot be considered here.

²² To posit an uncorrected slip is not uncommon, yet keeping the ‘we’ involves overruling three corrections, two of which cohere with the Simplician tradition. That in fact is the bold textual move, especially where viable alternatives exist. But the track record of the second hand, so far as we can judge on the basis of a partial text, is fairly good. Ignoring un-noted errors, of nine positive interventions (**a (i)** 6, **a (i)** 8, **c** 3, **c** 4, **d** 5, **d** 10, **d** 15, **d** 18) perhaps only one is demonstrably false, **d** 10: ἐπιβήσομεθ’ 1st hand, 2nd hand ἐπιβήσομεν’ requires an emendation to be kept, <σ’> ἐπιβήσομεν’. I wonder if it is a hypercorrection prompted by the other ‘we’s. For an argument against the correction, see Nünlist’s 2005, 84-5. Three of them, by

The literary Unity of I.232-90

I now come to the final argument for my reconstruction. The argument flows from the general stylistic and argumentative features of the passage, which also strongly indicate unity or continuity from I.232 to I.290.

If we consider the literary structure of I.232 to I.290, we can see that the whole section is organized around a single, unified design and that Empedocles used a deliberate method of exposition over these 58 lines of text. The most obvious feature of our passage, as noted by all commentators of B 17, is that within it Empedocles repeats himself several times. This, as noted by Graham 1988, is an effective way for him of not only to describe his doctrine of a cosmic cycle, but of enacting it before the hearer.

But that is not all, for Empedocles does not merely repeat himself. With each iteration, he offers the hearer a fuller or rather more refined picture. The main structural feature allowing us to note these shifts is a recurring poetic formula, usually in the same AB format, in which two lines are devoted to the symmetrical operations of Love and Strife over the elements. Love or unity stands in the first line, with Strife or separation and many in the second (as noted above, Line I.287 is an

contrast, are obviously right (**a (i)** 8, **c** 4 and **d** 5), and if I am right about the ‘we’s, that would make five of them. The use of dots may indicate collation, and M-P, 22-25 suggested that ensemble **d**, which alone has them, was from a different book, which was collated. On Janko’s reconstruction, however, the dots simply start at his I.335/**d** 5 without any discernable difference in practice or intent. Though much remains unclear, on the whole the second hand seems worthy of more respect than he has been given.

instance of the A formula, but in a BA pattern). Starting with an enigmatic or compressed version of his main theme at I.232-3, Empedocles refines it via repetition and gradual elaboration, with variation provided by inserting various comments between the repetitions, either supporting arguments or entailments of the thesis just asserted, or in one case a short hymn to Love. Thus, the alternation of ‘one and many’ is first described (I.232-3) at its most general or abstract level. The next iteration of the theme (I.245-51) now relates unity with Love, while many or ‘more’ [than one] with Strife, but it does not yet mention the elements. The third iteration repeats *verbatim* the first statement of the alternation of one and many, but now names all six first principles (the four named elements (I.249); Strife (I.250) and Love (I.251)). Overall, the net effect is a gain in clarity: in a first transition the two moving or motivational forces are distinguished from the more material elements (from 1st to 2nd statement), then in a second shift each of the four elements are distinguished (2nd to 3rd). And now, as revealed by the papyrus, —provided we read the participle at I.267— we have a fourth iteration (I.267-8) which repeats the theme of alternation, but now reveals the first principles as the sources for ‘everything’, and caps the claim with a zoogonic catalogue of known biological species, including ‘long-lived’ gods.

In cinematographic terms, the passage is the equivalent of a long ‘zoom in’ shot. Starting from an abstract account, Empedocles returns to and gradually refines the same notion until, by way of a final development or ‘unfolding’, the known world suddenly emerges into view. In this his style can be considered a hexameter version of Aeschylus’ ‘proleptic’ or developmental presentational style, with a probable precedent for both in Heraclitus.²³ Explicit acknowledgement of this presentational aspect is found elsewhere in the *corpus*, for instance in B 21.1-2, where Empedocles

²³ Kahn 1979; Mouraviev 2002.

tells the disciple that he is adding ‘witnesses’ or further details to his prior account, or in B 35.1-2, where he declares that he is ‘drawing upon’ an earlier account, nearly certainly the final three lines of our passage.

How then does this relate to lines I.286-7? Because, if the attribution of such a mode of exposition to Empedocles is correct, then the reconstruction of the text of I.273-87 shows how the AB pattern marked at lines I.267-8 is not the end-point of Empedocles’ ‘zoom in’ shot. Following the zoogonic catalogue, we get still more detail, in the form of the assertion that the relation between the elements and place is random within the cycle and from one cosmos to the next. That, as I have tried to show above, is the point of lines I.273-84. Following it, Empedocles then sums up the subsection on place and the elements by describing the two main types of global elemental movement, centrifugal Strife (I.286) and centripetal Love (I.287). Lastly, over lines I.288-9, he specifies the moment of turn-over between the two motive powers: when Love has retreated back to the centre of the whirl, and Strife has extended his dominion as far as down as he is allowed, that is when Love returns to the elements and stable mixtures.²⁴ Thus, the final lines provide exactly the same kind of increasing detail and elaboration of cosmological doctrine we have found going all the way from I.232, with a final repetition of the —here— BA pattern of lines coordinated with Love and Strife at I.286-7. Unlike the non-sequitur presented by the ‘we’ reading, the lines now follow perfectly naturally from the previous ones, by adding the moment of transition from one type of movement to the next. Despite the unhappy accidents found in the first hand’s copy, Empedocles’ ‘organic’ poetic

²⁴ Might the ‘we’ of συνερχόμεθα not then count as an elaboration and variation from συνερχόμεν(α)? Not according to the second hand at B 20/ensemble c 3, nor fragments B 21 and B 26 from Simplicius.

design, like some form of self-correcting DNA, shows us the way to repair the accidents of its own transmission.²⁵

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²⁵ My thanks to the anonymous reviewers of the journal for some very helpful and constructive criticisms, to which I have done my best to respond. All remaining faults are mine.

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